Dear POIR students:

We are writing to invite you to participate in an international conference on “Constructivism and Its Critics.” This event will be held at the University of Southern California on January 9-10, 2015. You would be most welcome to observe the proceedings and, as explained below, possibly even participate more directly.

The conference’s goal is to carry out a systematic assessment of the Constructivist research program in International Relations. The intent is to explore Constructivism’s theoretical, empirical and methodological strengths and weaknesses, and to debate what that tells us about Constructivism's present and future. A significant objective is to establish a path for moving forward Constructivism as a research program. This includes enabling a better understanding of international affairs in general and where Constructivism fits in relation to the discipline of IR in particular.

As far as our knowledge goes there is no available primer synthesizing the nature of and debates on Constructivism in IR. The ultimate goal of the conference is to produce such a primer to make an authoritative contribution to the canon similar to that of Neorealism and Its Critics and International Society and its Critics. We are happy to report that the editor of Cambridge University Press has already indicated approval of concept.

Our agenda obviously will be of varying interest to CIS faculty members and POIR students. As noted above, everyone is welcome to attend. Some also may wish to participate directly by contributing a paper that might end up in the volume we mention in the previous paragraph. The only requirements for a first draft to be presented at the workshop are as follows: (1) the length, counting references, should not exceed 5000 words; and (2) the subject matter, which can evolve in a dialogue with us to the extent you wish, should include at least one internal or external critique of constructivism that culminates in recommendations for further research.

Please let us know as soon as you can whether you are interested in participating in this conference. We look forward to hearing from you!

Warmest Regards,

Patrick James, Dornsife Dean’s Professor, USC

Jarrod Hayes, Assistant Professor, Georgia Institute of Technology

Mariano Bertucci, Postdoctoral Fellow, Tulane University